

Message Text

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FM AMCONSUL TORONTO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4827

INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMCONSUL QUEBEC

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMCONSUL MONTREAL

UNCLAS TORONTO 142

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, SOPN, EINV, CA

SUBJECT: PRESS WITH ONTARIO PREMIER REPORT ISRAELI CONCERN OVER QUEBE

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1. CLAIRE HOY, THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT COLUMNIST OF THE TABLOID THE TORONTO SUN, REPORTED IN HIS JANUARY 17 COLUMN DATED IN JERUSALEM THAT ONTARIO PREMIER DAVIS "WAS BEING GRILLED ABOUT THE QUEBEC SITUATION BY LOCAL REPORTERS" WITHIN MINUTES OF HIS ARRIVAL IN TEL AVIV JANUARY 14 AND THAT "WHEREVER HE'S GONE SINCE, IT SEEMS EVERYBODY HERE WANTS TO TALK ABOUT IT." DAVIS IS VISITING ISRAEL AS THE GUEST OF THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT.

2. HOY QUOTED AN UNNAMED STATE OFFICIAL, HAVING NOTED THE UNCERTAINTY ABOUT DOING BUSINESS WITH QUEBEC AND THE ENGLISH SPEAKING INFLUENTIAL JEWISH COMMUNITY IN MONTREAL WHICH HAS NOT ASSIMILATED INTO THE FRENCH COMMUNITY, AS SAYING "WE'RE WORRIED ABOUT WHAT COULD HAPPEN TO THEM IN A SEPARATED STATE. SOME OF THEM AREN'T ONLY CONCERNED, THEY'RE PANICKY, AND I DON'T BLAME THEM. NATURALLY, THESE WORRIES GET TRANSLATED BACK TO ISRAEL THROUGH FAMILY, FRIENDS AND BUSINESS ASSOCIATES, AND IT'S CERTAINLY GOING TO

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AFFECT BUSINESSMEN HERE WHO HAVE, UNTIL NOW, TENDED TO VIEW CANADA AS A NICE, STABLE, CERTAIN MARKET. THERE'S ALSO THE FEAR THAT MANY OF THE FRENCH HAVE BEEN BRAINWASHED BY THE PLO LINE AND OTHER RADICAL GROUPS WITH THE PROPAGANDA AGAINST ISRAEL AND PRO-ARAB. THEY VIEW THEMSELVES AS ONE OF THE EMERGING THIRD WORLD NATIONS, THAT SORT OF THING, AND THAT DOESN'T LEAVE MUCH ROOM FOR US. I KNOW THE OFFICIAL RESPONSE HERE IS SUBDUED, BUT I

CAN TELL YOU THEY'RE REALLY WORRIED."

3. AMONG THE QUESTIONS POSED TO PREMIER DAVIS WAS ONE REGARDING PRIME MINISTER TRUDEAU'S PREDICTION OF CIVIL WAR "AN OBVIOUS MISINTERPRETATION IN THE MEDIA HERE OF A RECENT TRUDEAU INTERVIEW." HOY NOTED DAVIS' CONTINUATION OF HIS OPTIMISM REGARDING CANADAIN CONFEDERATION AND HIS ATTEMPTS TO PLAY DOWN THE SITUATION. DESPITE THIS, ANOTHER ISRAELI OFFICIAL TOLD HOY THAT THE REPORTED PLANS OF "MANY QUEBEC ENTREPRENEURS" TO MOVE TO ONTARIO OR WESTERN CANADA "HASN' GONE UNNOTICED HERE. SAY WHAT YOU WILL, WE KNOW THERE'S A PROBLEM. WE ARE TOLD SO BY THE PEOPLE WHO RIGHT NOW ARE SUFFERING FROM IT AND EXPECT THEY MIGHT BE SUFFERING EVEN MORE IN THE FUTURE."
DIGGINS

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